

A New Constitution Is Being Tailored for Hayti

The Charter of Our Island Protectorate, the Newest Mode in Democratic Documents

By Kincheloe Robbins

WHAT'S the Constitution as between friends?"

To the time honored political question the equally time honored reply is, "Nothing."

But to the body of a free people, whether written or unwritten, the constitution is no less important than certain vital organs to the human organism, which function with such mechanical perfection that the individual becomes aware of their existence only when they become deranged and the doctor is called in to diagnose the trouble and alleviate the pain.

We, the American people, are conscious of possessing a Constitution because we have been called upon to amend it more than a dozen times. But the lawyers are our physicians. We are prone to avoid discussing the fundamental law ourselves, and we are distinctly afraid to tinker with it, or to apply the old-fashioned remedies of common sense and free discussion.

Just now the Senate of the United States has shown mild interest in its joint responsibility with the President in making treaties. Democratic Senators like Mr. Gore and Mr. Lewis are ready to abdicate this right, to shirk this responsibility, not so much for themselves as for their Republican colleagues, and that small minority of Democrats in the Senate who sometimes manifest an inclination to think independently and aloud.

What is the bar to giving Mr. Wilson this full sovereign authority?

The Constitution.

What prevents Colonel House from being pro-consul for Europe as well as the President's trusted friend?

The Constitution.

The present Administration has made us all aware that our Constitution, poor old thing, is quite inadequate for our present necessities. We have outgrown it. It has been in constant use for a longer period than any other existing great power's constitution. Fortunately, the Administration has provided us with a model setting forth its own ideals of executive power and constitutional guarantees of independence, if coordinate, share in government by the legislative and judicial branches. The Administration is trying it out first in Hayti, and may be ready with a new draft, modified to meet slightly different conditions on the American mainland when the opportune moment arrives.

Hayti, it may be recalled, was once a French colony. One hundred and fifteen

years ago it declared its independence, and won it against the pick of Napoleon's fighting men. We did not help, because the Haytiens were almost entirely of African descent and had been slaves. We did not believe, and apparently some of us do not now believe, though there was once a war about it, that the black man, like the white man, is included in the generalization that "all men are born free and equal." So for two years we have been in military possession of Hayti, which aided Bolivar to free South America while we were preserving neutrality in thought as well as deed.

The President of Hayti still lives in Port-au-Prince, but the real government is the United States Marine Corps, which takes its orders direct from Josephus Daniels, who may be assumed to act under the direction of President Wilson, and with the advice of Mr. Lansing; for although the marines dismissed the Haytian Congress last fall, they have not yet sent his passports to the American Minister, Mr. Bailly-Blanchard.

Self Determination Near Home

The problem of the Caribbean has been ever present with Mr. Wilson, who has been no less solicitous about the dependent peoples of the New World, as shown in his Mobile address, than for the welfare of democracy in Europe. And there has been ample time to work out the salvation of Hayti, and its neighboring erstwhile Republic of Santo Domingo, which is at present ruled by an admiral of the American navy, its Congress having been disposed of by the United States Marine Corps a year before the Haytian lawmakers were dismissed.

This new constitution for Hayti is one of the things planned for the American voter as a pleasant surprise. It was first to be given a fair trial, doubtless with a view of remedying any little defects inherent in even the best of constitutions, and then the work, as nearly perfect as merely human intelligence might hope to make it, to be held up to the admiration of the world.

Although the document bears internal evidence of having been translated from English into French, which is the official language of Hayti, the original is not yet accessible to the newspapers, which must, therefore, depend upon the Haytian official text. This is in some respects as vague as some of President Wilson's fourteen conditions; but whereas, according to well informed Washington gossip, both Colonel House and Senator Hitchcock possess the

President's own written interpretation of the fourteen conditions, no one apparently has thought fit to amplify and explain the new constitution of Hayti; and if, in the ordinary course of events, this is left to the court of Cassation of the Island Republic, it will be a life job for the entire bench. Thus Article VI says:

"Tout Haytien age de vingt-et-un ans accomplis exerce les droits politiques, s'il réunit d'ailleurs les autres conditions déterminées par la Constitution et par la loi."

Does that mean that the sturdy and industrious peasant women of Hayti are to be allowed to vote? The sentiment of the Washington Administration on this subject is well known, but the error is perhaps in the translation, which certainly does not include Haytian women specifically. The Court of Cassation may strain a point and say "tout Haytien," etc., means Haytiens without regard to sex; but why when a constitutional amendment on suffrage is pending in Washington pass the buck in Hayti?

In framing their own laws for themselves Haytiens were habitually explicit. Thus an earlier constitution prohibited white people from owning real estate, engaging in retail trade or becoming citizens of the republic. A decade ago the political disability of the white race was removed, and it is worth noting that the new constitution expressly grants to foreigners, color not specified, the right to own land and to establish agricultural, commercial and industrial enterprises. The Haytiens themselves have long favored a more liberal attitude toward the white settlers in their country, but the wisdom of giving the whites a free hand at this time can only be justified by the events. Hayti's natural wealth is immense, and owing to causes which may be discussed elsewhere, undeveloped.

Before giving further consideration to the new constitution, however, it may be well to note that, having been submitted to a vote of the people on June 12 last, it was adopted by a vote of 98,264 to 769. The figures are illuminating, in view of the fact that the election was conducted under the auspices of the Navy Department of the United States, as showing that less than 5 per cent of the population took the trouble to visit the polls.

Perhaps the most striking feature of the new constitution, one in which it is thus far unique, although it may serve as a lesson to the new nations to be erected in Europe, is headed "Article Spécial," and provides:

"All acts of the government of the United States during its military occupation in Hayti are ratified and validated."

"A—No Haytian shall be held civilly or criminally accountable for any act committed by virtue of orders of the (American) occupation or under its authority."

"The decrees of the court martials of the occupation which do not each time call attention to the pardoning power shall not be subject to revision."

"The acts of the executive power, up to

the promulgation of the present constitution, are equally ratified and validated."

It seems only a square deal that if the entire course of the American occupation be approved, including the dismissal of the Haytian Congress, the failure to live up to solemn guarantee of the convention to secure the national debt as to the payment of both principal and interest, President Darguenave's compulsory obedience to Secretary Daniels should also be condoned.

Alas for Hayti! The first statement in the new constitution reflects the ancient pride of her people.

"The Republic of Hayti is one and indivisible, free, sovereign and independent."

"Her territory, which includes the adjacent islands, is inviolable, and cannot be alienated either by treaty or by convention."

That means, of course, that there will not be a naval station for the United States in Haytian waters, a more convenient site having been found in Santo Domingo.

But the "free and independent republic" has no armed force save its gendarmerie, as provided by Articles CXVIII and CXIX, which is established to "maintain order, guarantee the rights of the people, and exercise the police authority in both city and country."

Washington Makes the Appointment

And under the terms of the convention between the United States and Hayti the chief of this armed force, like the receiver of customs and financial adviser, is appointed on the recommendation of the President of the United States. The chief at present is a highly popular marine officer, Colonel Williams, son of the late Police Inspector Williams of this city.

The national sovereignty is vested in the whole body of the citizenship, according to Article XXVII, and the exercise of that sovereignty is delegated to three powers: the legislative power, the executive power and the judiciary power. These form the government of the republic, which is "essentially civil, democratic and representative."

Each power is independent of the other two in those functions which it exercises separately, and none can delegate nor pass the limits of its fixed authority.

The legislative power, which is given priority in the fundamental law, may be considered logically after the authority of the President has been defined, because of the unusual nature of the duties confided to the Chief Magistrate.

The President of the republic will be elected for four years, entering upon his office, except where the election has been held to fill a vacancy, on the 15th of May, and in the event of a special election immediately the President may be returned to office for two consecutive terms, and may have a third term after a four-year interval, but a citizen who has been thrice elected President is no longer eligible for office.

The qualifications are that a candidate for the Presidency must be born of Haytian parentage, must never have renounced his nationality, must have attained forty years of age and be in enjoyment of his civil and political rights.

Prior to taking office the President will take the following oath before the National Assembly:

"I swear, before God and before the nation to observe and to faithfully enforce the constitution and laws of the Haytian people, to respect their rights and to maintain national independence and the integrity of territory."

The President shall appoint and dismiss the Secretaries of State. He is charged with overseeing the execution of the republic's treaties and with promulgating its laws under the seal of the republic as prescribed elsewhere.

He is charged with the execution of the constitution and the laws, the acts and decrees of the legislative body and of the National Assembly, but is without power to suspend or interpret these laws, acts and decrees.

He will safeguard according to law the domestic and foreign welfare of the state and make all treaties or international conventions with the sanction of the National Assembly. He has the authority to pardon or commute sentences except in the case of proceedings for high treason or other crime committed by the executive or the Secretaries of State, for which trials corresponding to impeachment and accusation must be instituted by the Chamber of Deputies and heard by the Senate sitting as a high court of justice.

Should the President be impeached the President of the Supreme Court (Tribunal de Cassation) will preside, and a two-thirds majority of the Senators is necessary to conviction. The President is authorized to accord amnesties in political matters within the provisions of the law, and shall command and direct the armed forces of the republic.

If the President finds it temporarily impossible to exercise his functions, they devolve upon the Council of the Secretaries of State.

This rule applies in the case of a vacancy by death or disability because of impeachment, and in case of a vacancy the Council of the Secretaries of State will immediately convoke the National Assembly to choose his successor for the unexpired presidential term.

All acts of the President, excepting decrees carrying nomination or dismissal of the Secretaries of State, will be countersigned by the Secretary of State, whose department is chiefly concerned. The President has no other power than that formally conferred by the constitution and the laws by virtue of the constitution. At the beginning of each session the President by a message shall account separately to each of the two chambers for his administration during the year, and present the general situation of the republic's domestic and foreign affairs.

Caribbean Republic Is Destined to Continue Under the Guidance of America

The annual salary of the President is fixed at \$24,000, and he must reside at the National Palace in Port-au-Prince.

The functions of the Chief Magistrate of Hayti are practically those prescribed in other constitutions of the Latin republics, but a closer study of the constitution reveals certain extraordinary powers conferred in other sections which seem not to have been modeled upon either the fundamental laws of France, the United States or Great Britain.

Financial System is a Novelty

Nothing of a similar nature to the financial system devised for Hayti is to be found in the laws of the countries above named. Nothing of the sort occurs in the Jones bill, which provides for local government in the American insular territories of Porto Rico and the Philippines.

One might suspect that the pink whiskers of the illustrious Senator from Illinois had been caressed by the trade winds of the Caribbean at a time when he was supposed to be in France on reading certain of these "jokers."

Senator Lewis believes that the President of the United States should be given an advanced O. K. on whatever course he may take in arranging a treaty of peace with the Central Powers.

Under Title IV of Chapter 5, which deals with finance, the Senator Lewis of Hayti has written in a financial dictatorship for the President of the republic. No revenues can be levied except by law, and no charge can be fixed against any minor political division of the country without its formal consent, and no financial legislation shall be effective more than one year.

No privileges shall be established in matters of taxation or exemptions, augmentations or diminutions, except those established by law. But, says Article CXII, "there shall be no pension nor gratification nor allocation charged against the public treasury except in virtue of a law proposed by the Executive power."

The budget for each Secretary of State shall be divided in chapters and shall be voted upon by article. The Secretary of State for Finance will keep account of the income and expenses of the republic according to a mode to be established by law and this account shall be annually reviewed by the legislative body which shall likewise receive the budget for the coming year, not less than eight days from the opening of the session.

The examination and liquidation of the accounts of the general administration and

of all matters relating to the treasury shall be according to the method established by law, but "in case the legislative body is unable for some reason to act on the budget for one or more ministerial departments before adjournment the budget or budgets of the departments interested in force during the current budgetary year will be continued for the budget year following."

The legislative power is defined by the new constitution as consisting of two assemblies, a Chamber of Deputies and a Senate, which form the Legislative Corps. There shall be one Deputy for every 60,000 of population, and until a census is taken, the membership will be limited under the old system of political divisions into arrondissements. A Deputy must be twenty-five years of age, in the enjoyment of civil and political rights, and must have lived a year in the arrondissement he represents. He is elected for a two-year term, and may be reelected for any period.

The Senators, who shall be fifteen in number, represent the departments, but are elected for a six-year term by universal suffrage. They must be thirty years of age and have lived in the department two years, possessing the other qualifications set forth in the case of Deputies.

Together these two bodies constitute the National Assembly, which shall elect the President of the Republic and receive his oath of office, declare war on the initiative of the executive power, and approve or reject peace or other treaties and international conventions. But, as already indicated, the executive power has sole authority to institute financial legislation, and neither chamber has authority to increase the budget prepared. The duties of the lawmakers are, in fact, to register the President's wishes. They are to hold annual sessions.

The five Secretaries of State, who are to have the privilege of the floor in both Houses, are no longer to be responsible to the legislative power, as under the old constitution, but will be wholly the creatures of the President.

The judicial power remains practically unchanged, the members of the Court of Cassation being appointed, however, by the President.

Such, in brief, is the form of government which must be the Washington administration's ideal, since it was made in the United States, or at least by and with the consent of the American military occupation.

The relations of Hayti with the United States are not touched upon, except as already noted. They are amply covered, too amply, perhaps, by the convention which places the United States in control of the country.

Will the Serb or the Bulgar Be Left to Rule the Balkans?

By E. M. Chadwick

THE recent unconditional surrender of Bulgaria was purely military. Political issues were specifically left for settlement to the final peace conference. From now onward until the peace delegates meet, Bulgaria will do her utmost to bring influence to bear on the Entente, in order to secure the best possible settlement of her territorial demands. She has lost no time in beginning her propaganda—more than one indication of it has already been discernible in the press here—and, if rumor speaks true, she is not above trying to buy consideration from the Entente by turning her polluted sword against her former friends and allies.

Now the predominating influence in the Balkans will have to be in the future either Serbia or Bulgaria. Obligations of honor and justice alone would make it imperative that we should support Serbia; yet the Bulgarian propaganda is so unscrupulous and so deadly efficient that there is still danger of a wrong being done when the final settlement takes place unless public opinion is put on its guard in time.

The Virtues of the Bulgarian Peasant

It is indeed not only a matter of honor and justice. Every practical consideration points to the support of Serbia. The Bulgarian element, however, which still contrives in spite of everything to exist here as it does in England, seems to have succeeded in spreading a sort of vague query in the public mind as to whether, after all, an influential Bulgaria might not be able to insure greater stability in the Balkans. The pro-Bulgars point to the much advertised virtues of the Bulgarian peasant—his industry, his thriftiness, his keen practical good sense—and ask, in effect: What better foundation can you have than this to which to build a sound political organism? Yet similar virtues in Germany, even combined with others to which the Bulgars can lay no claim, have not succeeded in producing a nation with which the rest of the world can live in comfort. Since the support given to Serbia will be more reasoned and more effective if the Entente nations can be convinced that she represents from all standpoints the most desirable element in the Balkans, it seems worth while to consider carefully—now, while there is yet time—what might be expected from a strong Bulgaria, or alternatively, from a strong Serbia, in the light of the past record of both countries.

It is first of all a question of democracy versus autocracy. The Bulgars, from the earliest days of their recorded history, have shown a consistent readiness to submit to autocratic rule.

At their first appearance in the Balkans they were led by chiefs whose power over the people was absolute. On the other hand, the organization of the Serbian tribes from the very commencement of their oc-

cupation of the Peninsula showed precisely the same democratic spirit that underlies their national life to-day. Stephane Dushan, the grand ruler who established the medieval Serbian empire, compiled a code of laws (the celebrated Zakonik) which for liberality was only equalled at that period by Magna Charta. The same differences in the character of the two peoples persisted throughout the long period of Turkish domination. While the Bulgars lay passive under a rule which was always tyrannical and often inhuman, the Serbs were never reconciled to the loss of their independence. The story of the preservation of the spirit of liberty in Serbia through five centuries of Oriental rule is one of the most inspiring and at the same time one of the most romantic things in the story of the world. There is certainly nothing in Bulgarian history to compare with the perpetual efforts of the Serbian Haiduk chiefs for the protection of their people. The tale of the last hundred years shows still the same tendencies. Serbia won her freedom for herself, unaided—Bulgaria waited till some one else would take the necessary trouble for her. Ever since the independence of both countries has been achieved the contrast persists. The Serbian constitution approximates more nearly to the true democratic ideal than any other in the world, and Serbia lives by her constitution. Theoretically, Bulgaria, too, has constitutional government.

In practice, ever since 1878, she has been governed by autocrats; first by Stanbuloff and since his fall by Ferdinand of Coburg. The mere fact that Ferdinand has at last overreached himself and abdicated in panic does not affect the fundamental character of the Bulgarian people. In tolerating his rule so long they have only followed the way that has always suited them best. They may be on the eve of a change of heart, but, all things considered, we can hardly be expected to believe in that until proofs are forthcoming.

If we wish to insure government by the people for the people in as large a part of the world as it lies in our power to influence, our course in the Balkans is plain: to strengthen the hands of those who already practise the principles we ourselves believe in, and to take away from those who follow contrary methods all power to enforce their views on any people outside their own borders.

It is not in the interest of future world security to assign a position of any influence, in any part of the world, either to a government which rules by autocratic methods, or to a nation which, like the Bulgarian, readily allows itself to be so ruled. Such a nation is not only in danger of being enticed by its leaders into ways of aggression, but it is liable to be made use of by other autocratic powers for similar purposes.

Bulgaria, moreover, has shown plainly that while she does not care about ruling herself, she wants to rule others, and her imperialistic tendencies cannot be tolerated in the world which we are fighting to build up on the ashes of the old.

It is of no use for her to declare, as

she has repeatedly done since the final victory of the Entente became certain, that her desire is for a settlement on the basis of President Wilson's programme. Her whole conduct, not only in this war but in the Balkan wars of 1912 and 1913, has made it perfectly evident that whenever possible she will pursue an annexationist policy against any country which has the misfortune to be her neighbor.

The Fascinating Game of Discovering Bulgars

What makes the Bulgarian imperialism the more deadly is that it is invariably covered up with the cloak of "realization of national unity." Wherever Bulgaria desires territory she "discovers" Bulgars. One of the leading Bulgarian papers has even gone so far as to state that "if one undertook to search for the origin of the Rumanians and the Greeks, one would find that 75 per cent of them were of Bulgarian origin" ("Kam-bana," October 27, 1916). She was trumpeted aloud for years her claim on Macedonia on the same ground of "national unity," yet on October 20 of last year her Minister of the Interior sent out a circular to the prefects in the occupied districts of Macedonia which stated:

"It is for the organs of the administration to purify the Macedonian provinces of all foreign elements, in this way creating an essentially Bulgarian atmosphere, even at the risk of the complete depopulation of these countries."

Is this legitimate realization of Bulgaria's national unity, or is it barbaric imperialism?

Those who have followed only superficially the Balkan unrest of the past and have lately heard much talk of the necessity for enlarging Serbia's borders may wonder whether in the matter of imperialism there is much to choose between the two. But to any fair minded student of the subject there is all the difference in the world between Serbia's irredentism and Bulgaria's imperialism. Serbia, ever since she freed the first yard of her own soil, has been possessed of one great desire: the release of all her brethren from alien domination. Through all the ups and downs of her stormy history this aim has never been lost sight of, though at times it may have seemed even to the most optimistic Serb of them all to be impossible to realize. Serbia has been the rallying point for all her oppressed kindred. She has suffered for her own race; she has fought for her own race; but since the early days of her history, when every people lived by imperialism and national existence was a matter of "eat or be eaten," she has shown no desire for wars of conquest. Even in the matter of rescuing her fellow Slavs she has not indicated any wish to annex them. Federation in one form or another has always been her plan; and this is a fact which is by no means as generally realized as it should be—she has evinced a broad-minded and generous readiness to bear, if need be, the lion's share of the trouble and responsibility without by any means asking the lion's share of the reward!

Again, against Bulgaria's notorious in-

ability to keep faith either with her friends or her enemies set Serbia's attitude to friend and foe alike. One need not say much. Every day of the last four years has told how Serbia keeps faith. There is no nation of whose loyalty we can be more sure, for none has been called on to prove it in such adverse conditions. Pashitch's immortal reply to the Austrian peace offer, the rejection of which meant certain ruin for Serbia, expressed in characteristic terms the whole spirit in which she regards the duty of an ally: "It is better to die in beauty than to live in shame. We fight!" It is possible to pin one's faith to that; but Bulgaria can offer no parallel to which thing but a wholesome distrust could possibly be pinned by any one not courting trouble.

Here you have the heart of the matter from the standpoint of its relation to the outside world. But what about its relation to the Balkan peoples themselves? From which might they reasonably expect the most beneficent exercise of influence, from Serbia or from Bulgaria?

It must be remembered that if the whole of Serbia's territory is restored to her, and the Southern Slav territories of Austria-Hungary permitted to join her, the resultant federation will be geographically the largest of the Balkan states. Even the Serbs alone, without the Croats and Slovenes, occupy a considerably larger territory than the Bulgars. This Southern Slav federation will have a highly advantageous position on the Adriatic, and since the old unhappy Italian claims on Dalmatia have been so gracefully withdrawn, it should—and undoubtedly will—have the great benefit of a close cultural friendship with Italy, with all that that implies. It will, above all, be a homogeneous state, with no interest in conquest and no desire but to be allowed to achieve its own reconstruction and its own material and spiritual development in peace. Bulgaria, on the other hand, can only secure an influential position by annexation. Under the best of circumstances, then, an enlarged Bulgaria would carry within herself seeds of perpetual unrest, particularly since inevitably the greater part of the annexed territory would be Serbian, and the Serbs have by no means lost their inherited aversion to alien rule. The fact that such an enlarged Bulgaria must contain a new "irredenta" would involve a perpetual menace of war among the Balkan States. It would suffice, moreover, to give Bulgaria only a small section of the Moravia country she is so eager to retain, to provide her with a connection with Hungary and Germany, and bring about a Turanian "bloc" which, however narrow the connecting corridor might be, would still provide a constant danger, not only to Serbia, but to the whole world, in the form of an open door for a future "Drang nach Osten."

Under the best of circumstances, then, the conditions that would actually obtain, the situation in the Balkans would be even worse, with Bulgaria in any position of influence outside her own borders. She has shown only too clearly her methods with conquered peoples. The tale of massacre and torture in Serbia is almost too hide-

ous for recital. The cruelty with which she has driven thousands upon thousands of people—men, women and little children—into an exile that implies almost certain death, till sections of the country have been totally depopulated; the indecent treachery to Christendom of her killing the Constantinople harem with little Serbian girls; the inhuman repression with which she has tried to suffocate in the residues of the population every last vestige of national spirit and even of national identity—these things augur ill for the Balkans if Bulgaria be left in any position of power after the war.

Compare these methods with the standpoint of the Serbs. In the short time that Serbia held Macedonia, between the end of the Balkan War and the beginning of the Great War, her treatment of the Macedonians was absolutely consistent with the claims she had made regarding them. She had declared them to be Serbs, and she treated them as Serbs, as brethren redeemed at long last from foreign rule.

Serbia's Brave Work of Reorganization

She found the country in a miserable condition, poor, backward, with its people distracted by conflicting intrigue and propaganda till they did not know where they stood. She set to work with the slender means at her disposal to reorganize the country; introduced her own equitable system of justice, opened schools and did her utmost to set the Macedonians on their feet and make them feel that they had, so to speak, come to their own people. She had indeed not time to do much before the great war broke over her, but that she did succeed in convincing the Macedonians that it was a desirable thing to be a Serb has been clearly enough shown by the methods Bulgaria has since found it necessary to employ in order to Bulgarianize them.

In the course of the insurrection which took place in Serbia last year, the insurgents seized Prokuplje, where there were 300 Bulgarian soldiers. Remember, these Serbs had been driven to revolt by seeing the most inhuman cruelties practised on their people. The last straw, according to one reliable account, had been the carrying off of young girls to Constantinople. If ever men had an excuse for seeing red these had. But what did they do to the Bulgarian soldiers in Prokuplje when they had them in their power? They disarmed them and conducted them to the outskirts of Vranja, where they released them, saying, "We do not want to hurt any one; all we want is to free ourselves." The Bulgarians were not capable of seeing the nobility of that "we don't want to hurt any one," and the repression of the rebellion was appalling; but there is no need to go into that here. It is only one detail of the whole horrible story; but the Prokuplje incident serves well to illustrate the essential difference in outlook of the two peoples.

There is another highly important aspect of the question, from the general as well as from the Balkan standpoint. Most of the best evidences of genuine civilization in the Balkans (apart from the an-

cient Greek and Byzantine) are of Serbian origin; and the capacity of the Serbs for real culture is unquestionably higher. While they have not the Bulgarian taste for steady, plodding labor, they have far more inspiration. The Serbian language is rich in beautiful literature, above all in poetry. There is practically no Bulgarian literature, except the products of a few writers of to-day, of no outstanding importance. Bulgaria has nothing whatever to compare with the great traditional ballads of the Serbs, probably the finest folk poetry in the world. The whole viewpoint of the Serbs is higher, alike in art, in the standards of daily life and intercourse; and while they have no tendency to force their views on others, there can be no doubt that the influence of a strong nation of peculiarly high moral perceptions, of unusual artistic gifts and great capacity for progress, may well be an important factor for good in the life of its neighbors.

There has been far too great a tendency in the past to condemn the Serbs as backward. Materially it is true that they are backward in many ways, but by no means in all. It must be remembered that from the end of the fourteenth till the beginning of the nineteenth century Serbia was debarré by the Turkish rule from all possibility of progress. The fact of the matter is that in the short time since they regained their freedom the Serbs have achieved a progress which is little short of miraculous, and is all the more to their credit since they have had to do it alone. If Bulgaria has been the spoiled child of Europe, Serbia has been the Cinderella.

From any nation that has contrived to keep its end up in the face of the difficulties which have beset the Serbs in the past hundred years, we may reasonably expect very great things in the way of progress when once its freedom and security are properly safeguarded. Moreover, in one respect, Serbia is ahead of all the rest of us.

She Came Close to the Democratic Ideal

The natural instinct of the Serbs is to cooperate, and in the application of the principle of cooperation to every aspect of their national life they have actually succeeded in getting very much nearer than most nations to what is presumably the ideal goal of democracy: the greatest good of the greatest number.

It was not for nothing that in the days before the war Serbia was known as the poor man's paradise.

In any case, if we secure for Serbia the position to which she is entitled, we shall have, as the leading influence in the hitherto distracted Balkans, a contented state, developing on sane and natural lines, and deriving from institutions and customs which have grown normally out of the needs and through the efforts of the people themselves an infinitely greater stability than can be expected in countries like Bulgaria, whose development has been artificially forced from outside assistance.

We shall have, moreover, an unfailing bulwark against any future revival of Teutonic aggression, a nation whom we have proved,

whose ideals are as high as—if not higher than—our own, who has shown again and again that, as she lives by her faith, so she is prepared to die for it; a guardian after our own heart of the sacred principles for which to-day the whole civilized world is struggling.

Can this be said of Bulgaria? I think not.

Life Behind the Screen in Germany

Print Paper

THE German newspapers have been hard hit by the great advance in print paper prices. Since the war began the price has risen from twenty-one to fifty-four pfennigs per kilogram, corresponding to nearly 6 cents a pound. In consequence of this advance more than 1,600 newspapers have suspended publication since 1914. About a month ago the government and the Reichstag discussed the precarious position of the press and reached an agreement that the government give assistance to the newspapers by bearing a part of the advanced price and making allotments of print paper to the publishers. Allotments are regulated to cover only a limited part of each newspaper's requirements, and the price abatement, which amounts to sixteen pfennigs per kilogram, applies only to these allotments. This system applies equally to the papers of all political parties.

Smokes

IT has recently been announced that the German cigar factories are to close down at the end of the year for lack of raw tobacco. Some 6,000 factories, which in 1916 had 220,000 employees, will be closed. Only a few manufacturers hope to keep their establishments going until the 1918 crop is ready to be worked up.

The Call of the Vine

SO long as there are Germans left who will pay \$107 for a gallon of wine that country is evidently not yet in the last throes of starvation. That is the price at which a cask of Eitlviller Taubersberg was sold at the recent auctions of Rhine wines of the 1917 vintage. The total results, too, of the wine auction for all Germany show that the people are spending remarkably large sums for wine. The spring auctions, covering mostly wines of the 1917 vintage, brought in a total of \$13,200,000, reckoning at the normal rate of exchange. The significance of this sum becomes evident when it is stated that the larger vintages of the years before the war never brought more than \$3,200,000. It is a noteworthy picture—Germany staggering to its fall in a military and political sense, yet the armies of war profiteers are falling over each other to buy luxurious wines.